



PRE-DRAFT



**REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY
(RSS)**



TOPIC PAPER 14:

EDUCATION AND SKILLS



**Consultation
Winter 2004/05**



Foreword

The Yorkshire and Humber Assembly has reached another crucial stage in the development of 'PLANet Yorkshire and Humber' - the new Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). A draft of the new RSS is to be submitted to Government by the end of April 2005.

In preparing the new draft RSS the Assembly is committed to involving as wide a range of organisations and individuals as possible. The preparation process for the new draft RSS therefore provides for two specific periods of public consultation *before* a new draft RSS is prepared and submitted to Government. This is in addition to the continual involvement of many partners in the technical work for the new RSS.

The first consultation document - 'Draft Spatial Vision and Strategic Approach' (July 2004) - considered the overall approach that should guide the preparation of the new RSS (particularly the role of sub-areas), key issues facing different parts of the region and possible responses to these issues.

We have now reached the second stage of consultation. This is based on the need to consider in more detail how we can develop a clear spatial strategy for the region that takes into account all of the issues identified in the RSS Project Plan ('Shaping the Future', January 2004). This second stage of consultation is therefore structured around a series of 'topic papers', of which this is one. The full list of topic papers is:

Topic paper 1:	Introduction to Pre-Draft RSS
Topic paper 2:	Spatial Options
Topic paper 3:	Housing
Topic Paper 3a:	Distributing the Housing Requirement
Topic paper 4:	Economy
Topic paper 5a:	Freight
Topic paper 5b:	Strategic Public Transport
Topic paper 5c:	Public Transport Accessibility
Topic paper 5d:	Demand Management
Topic paper 5e:	Aviation
Topic paper 5f:	Transport Investment Priorities
Topic paper 6:	CAP reform
Topic paper 7:	Energy
Topic paper 8:	Water
Topic paper 9:	Sustainable Tourism
Topic paper 10:	Forestry
Topic paper 11:	Biodiversity
Topic paper 12:	Culture
Topic paper 13:	Health
Topic paper 14:	Education
Topic paper 15:	Minerals
Topic paper 16:	Sustainable Waste Management
Topic paper 17:	Retail and Leisure
Topic paper 18:	Monitoring
Topic paper 19:	Climate Change

Please bear in mind that these topic papers are raising many challenges that policies in the new RSS will need to address. The topic papers do not include draft policies and there will need to be a great deal of integration across topic areas before the policies are drafted. The purpose of this stage of consultation is to receive feedback on what direction you think RSS policy should take.

Please note that these topic papers have not been endorsed by the Assembly, or its advisory body the Regional Planning and Infrastructure Commission. They do not represent Assembly policy but give an important opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to feed in to the further development of the new RSS for the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Your comments

We would like your comments on these topic papers. You can answer the questions that we ask in the papers or you can send us your general comments.

We need to hear from you by **Friday 18th March 2005** so that your views and ideas can be taken into account as we prepare the new draft RSS to submit to Government.

Please send your comments to

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All the topic papers and accompanying documents can be found at www.yhassembly.gov.uk

Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal

At each stage of the development of the new RSS, a Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA) is being carried out. At this stage, this appraisal has particularly concentrated on Topic Paper 2 – Spatial Options. The report of this appraisal is also available from the Assembly.

Any queries

If you have any queries about the topic papers, or any aspect of RSS, please call the Regional Planning and Transport team on 01924 331590.

Topic Paper 14 - Education and Skills

Introduction

1. The RSS Project Plan (January 2004) suggested that education and skills issues should be considered as a theme to run through the preparation of the whole of the RSS, so that they were not just considered in relation to the provision of physical educational establishments. With this in mind, consultants were appointed to scope out how the RSS might properly ensure that education and skills issues were appropriately linked to the spatial strategy for the development of the region.
2. In addition, work on economy-related issues for RSS considered education and skills to be a crucial aspect of the region's development, especially with regards to increasing the region's competitiveness (see Topic Paper 4 – Economy).
3. This topic paper summarises the work carried out by consultants (MTL) for the Assembly to scope education and skills issues in relation to the development of the RSS. It draws directly from the Executive Summary of their final report. The brief for the consultants and their full report is available at www.yhassembly.gov.uk as part of the Planning and Transport Library.

Background

4. Policy SOC2 in existing RSS (December 2004, based on the Selective Review of RPG12) relates to education. It focuses on provision of new educational facilities and states that development plans should 'recognise the importance of the educational infrastructure in the region to promoting both social inclusion and economic growth and regeneration...', 'encourage the retention and development of education and learning facilities in locations that are accessible by good public transport...' and 'also take into account the need to secure the widespread provision of outreach facilities in areas not accessible by good public transport...'. Policy SOC2 is included in full in Annex A.

Research

5. MTL consultants were appointed to carry out the scoping work into education and skills issues for the new RSS that is summarised here. MTL's draft report was taken to the Assembly's Education and Skills Commission in September 2004 for comments. The feedback received from the Commission was incorporated into their final report.
6. The report from MTL includes analysis of educational and skills attainment across the region, to highlight the spatial differences that emerge. The main patterns they identify are set out in Annex B.

Issues identified

7. The Executive Summary of MTL's report summarises the issues they identify. These are set out in Annex C.

Messages for new RSS

8. The messages for new RSS that come out of this work seem to fall into three categories: firstly, ensuring that policies provide for full and fair access to education for all and setting out what should be considered when providing for new and expanded physical locations for facilities; secondly understanding how access to education and skills links closely to the broader development agenda; and thirdly suggesting that policies should be 'education proofed' as they are drafted.
9. The importance of ensuring that spatial policies enable physical access to education for all sectors of the community is the focus of Policy SOC2 of existing RSS (see Annex A). This policy does not currently cover the issues identified in the MTL report and could be changed to do so. These include being explicit about the need for access issues need to be considered in relation to wider housing, transport and economic developments.
10. As the MTL report states, access can also become increasingly relevant when considering more specific education and skills issues, such as: the location of specialist provision (where there may not be a neat fit between supply and local demographics); the travel to work patterns of teaching and support staff; the location of student accommodation; provision in disadvantaged communities and target groups and different employer demands. These issues could be covered more explicitly by a revised Policy SOC2.
11. The need to understand how access to education and opportunities for skills' improvements link to the wider development agenda for the region is clear. In drafting the new RSS, the spatial strategy will need to consider both whether proposed development patterns are taking into account where it is that education and skills opportunities can be provided (i.e. link to priorities of education bodies and strategies of bodies such as the LSCs) and whether there are new development patterns that can be encouraged to kick start an improvement to the skills base in parts of the region that currently suffer from a low skill base. This issue also has important links to the regional competitiveness agenda (see topic paper 4).
12. The suggestion of 'education proofing' of policies is made in the MTL research report. In relation to the drafting of the new RSS, this proofing will be picked up through the use of the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF) to appraise the draft RSS. At a more local level, plans will also be subject to similar appraisal tools that should include consideration of education and skills issues and the extent to which they are reflected in the spatial planning approaches being put forward.

Questions for consultation

1. *Do you agree that the education and skills related issues that the RSS needs to tackle are those set out in this paper?*
2. *Do you agree that the new RSS should tackle these issues in the way set out in paragraphs 8 to 12 above?*

References

The brief for the consultant's work can be found in the Planning and Transport library at www.yhassembly.gov.uk

The consultant's final report can be found in the Planning and Transport library at www.yhassembly.gov.uk

Annex A

Policy SOC2 of existing RSS (December 2004, based on Selective Review of RPG12)

Policy SOC2 Education

a) Development plans should recognise the importance of the educational infrastructure in the region to promoting both social inclusion and economic growth and regeneration. This will include capitalising on the expertise in the region's education and learning establishments and facilitating the linkages between all levels of learning provision and the other higher education facilities across the region to encourage the growth of modern knowledge based industries and business clusters.

b) Development plans should encourage the retention and development of education and learning facilities in locations that are accessible by good public transport and in accordance with the locational criteria set out in Policies P1 and T2.

c) Development plans and other relevant strategies should also take into account the need to secure the widespread provision of outreach facilities in areas not accessible by good public transport (as set out in policy T2) and the need to open up opportunities for the delivery of learning through ICT and should consider how the multi-use of buildings and facilities can help in this provision.

Annex B

Patterns of educational and skills attainment extracted from MTL's report (Section 4 and Appendix 1)

- In most cases, only North Yorkshire performs in line with the national average, while South Yorkshire usually has the lowest sub-regional average alongside parts of the Humber. Looking at the GCSE attainment of 15/16 year olds for instance, the Humber and South Yorkshire have a lower proportion of people attaining the highest GCSE grades, although West Yorkshire performs marginally better. It is only North Yorkshire which exceeds the regional average.
- A similar pattern is evident when looking at other key indicators, with South Yorkshire regularly dragging down the regional average, North Yorkshire consistently performing well above average and parts of the Humber and West Yorkshire having more mixed fortunes. Adult participation in learning for instance is higher in York and North Yorkshire than South Yorkshire districts.
- Employment by SOC also gives an indication of qualification and skill levels within the workforce. In South Yorkshire a higher proportion of people are employed in low-skilled occupations than higher level managerial and professional occupations. The Humber also has a high proportion of people employed in elementary and machine operative occupations. The distinction between South Yorkshire/Humber and West/North Yorkshire is also evident when looking at local authority scores on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). With the exception of the East Riding and North Lincolnshire, the highest ranking districts i.e. least deprived are in North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire.
- Looking in more detail within sub-regions, other patterns are evident. Within North Yorkshire the coastal area of Scarborough, the former coal mining area of Selby and the rural districts of Richmondshire and Ryedale on average do not perform as well as other districts. In the Humber, Hull and North East Lincolnshire tend to drag down sub-regional averages with Hull in particular having high concentrations of deprivation.
- In West Yorkshire sub-regional patterns are not as easy to identify with each local authority district being influenced by a number of different factors. Leeds for instance has pockets of quite significant deprivation, but this is often masked by the performance of more affluent areas and the drive of the city centre economy. Similarly whilst Wakefield is an important commuter city for Leeds and has some very affluent areas, areas to the east of the city have been affected by coalfield closures and industrial decline.
- In South Yorkshire, although the sub-region consistently performs below regional averages, Sheffield and Rotherham have been the main centres of growth, whilst the former coalfield areas of Barnsley and Doncaster have been less successful in their regeneration.

- At a more local level therefore there is a correlation between social composition, wealth and the economy and levels of educational attainment and skills levels. The data shows that across the region, people with higher level skills are more likely to be in employment than those with no qualifications. Barnsley in particular has 83.8% of people of working age qualified to level 4 or above in employment compared to only 36.6% of people with no qualifications. It is the sum total of these disparities which contributes to the region's structural deficit and which gives the imperative to National and Regional policy on education and skills and informs the setting of targets.

Annex C – main findings from MTL report – extract from Executive Summary

- i. On the development of RSS, guidance indicates RSS should set out policies and proposals “governing the future distribution of regionally or sub-regionally significant activities”. RSS should also, “inform and take account of other strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land-use activities”.
- ii. Whilst some education and skills issues may be “regionally or sub-regionally significant activities” which RSS should consider, many issues do not impinge on the development planning system and have their own institutional and policy arrangements in place. This raises questions as to what RSS can and should usefully say about these issues, and whether it should be concerned with issues already dealt with through other strategies and programmes.
- iii. There are many different domains of activity within the education and skills arena, each of which may serve different catchment areas, have different institutional arrangements and face different issues. These issues may also have different spatial implications which may, or may not, be sub-regionally or regionally significant.
- iv. Given the objectives of national and regional policy to raise educational attainment and increase participation in education and training at all ages, everyone in the region needs access to good quality learning provision from early years to higher education and community-based provision.
- v. Whilst increasing access does not necessarily imply the need for more physical development i.e. the use of e-learning and delivery of Higher Education through Further Education, access issues need to be considered in relation to wider housing, transport and economic developments.
- vi. Access can also become increasingly relevant when considering more specific education and skills issues, such as: the location of specialist provision (where there may not be a neat fit between supply and local demographics); the travel to work patterns of teaching and support staff; the location of student accommodation; provision in disadvantaged communities and target groups and different employer demands.
- vii. A key issue which RSS needs to consider is that whilst many education and skills issues have spatial dimensions e.g. inequalities in educational attainment and skills levels, these issues do not always require a development planning response, or a regional response. It may be that there is a role for RSS in developing policies that influence the spatial distribution of resources, and in making choices about spatial priorities. Framing such policies on prioritisation will need to be undertaken with the agencies concerned.

- viii. Some issues may also be better dealt with at a local level through Local Development Frameworks rather than the RSS, particularly given that it can be difficult and sometimes misleading to generalize about issues at a regional level.
- ix. With this in mind, the development of spatial policies in RSS should also consider how these may impact on education and skills provision to ensure they do not inadvertently hinder access to provision or the abilities of providers to develop and improve the quality, scope and scale of provision.
- x. It may be that rather than being an issue to be dealt with through town and country planning, development planning policies may instead need to be subject to “education and skills proofing” while they are being developed to ensure all issues and implications are considered, and that education and skills development and economic development (including planning considerations), along with inclusion and environmental considerations, are progressing in the same direction.